

Public Law 108–464
108th Congress

An Act

Dec. 21, 2004
[H.R. 3204]

To require the Secretary of the Treasury to mint coins in commemoration of the
tercentenary of the birth of Benjamin Franklin, and for other purposes.

Benjamin
Franklin
Commemorative
Coin Act.
31 USC 5112
note.

*Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of
the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the “Benjamin Franklin Commemorative Coin Act”.

SEC. 2. FINDINGS.

The Congress finds the following:

(1) Benjamin Franklin made historic contributions to the development of our Nation in a number of fields: government, business, science, communications, and the arts.

(2) Benjamin Franklin was the only Founding Father to sign all of our Nation’s organizational documents.

(3) Benjamin Franklin spent his career as a successful printer, which included printing the official currency for the colonies of Pennsylvania, Delaware, New Jersey and Maryland.

(4) Franklin’s “Essay on Paper Currency” of 1741 proposed methods to fix the rate of exchange between the colonies and Great Britain.

(5) Benjamin Franklin, during the American Revolution, designed the first American coin, the “Continental” penny.

(6) Franklin made “A Penny Saved is A Penny Earned” a household phrase to describe the American virtues of hard work and economical living.

(7) Franklin played a major role in the design of the Great Seal of the United States, which appears on the One Dollar Bill and other major American symbols.

(8) Before 1979, Benjamin Franklin was the only non-president of the United States whose image graced circulating coin and paper currency.

(9) The official United States half dollar from 1948–1963 showed Franklin’s portrait, as designed by John Sinnock.

(10) Franklin’s “Way to Wealth” has come to symbolize America’s commitment to free enterprise.

(11) The Franklin Institute Science Museum in Philadelphia houses the first steam printing machine for coinage, used by the United States Mint, which was placed in service in 1836, the 130th anniversary year of Franklin’s birth.

(12) In 1976, Franklin Hall in The Franklin Institute Science Museum in Philadelphia was named the Official National Monument to the great patriot, scientist and inventor.

(13) The Franklin Institute and four other major Franklin-related Philadelphia cultural institutions joined hands in 2000 to organize international programs to commemorate the forthcoming 300th anniversary of Franklin's birth in 2006.

(14) The Congress passed the Benjamin Franklin Tercentenary Act in 2002, creating a panel of distinguished Americans, with its Secretariat in Philadelphia, to work with the private sector in recommending appropriate Tercentenary programs.

SEC. 3. COIN SPECIFICATIONS.

(a) DENOMINATIONS.—The Secretary of the Treasury (hereinafter in this Act referred to as the “Secretary”) shall mint and issue the following coins:

(1) \$1 SILVER COINS WITH YOUNGER FRANKLIN IMAGE ON OBVERSE.—Not more than 250,000 \$1 coins bearing the designs specified in section 4(a)(2), each of which shall—

(A) weigh 26.73 grams;

(B) have a diameter of 1.500 inches; and

(C) contain 90 percent silver and 10 percent copper.

(2) \$1 SILVER COINS WITH OLDER FRANKLIN IMAGE ON OBVERSE.—Not more than 250,000 \$1 coins bearing the designs specified in section 4(a)(3), each of which shall—

(A) weigh 26.73 grams;

(B) have a diameter of 1.500 inches; and

(C) contain 90 percent silver and 10 percent copper.

(b) LEGAL TENDER.—The coins minted under this Act shall be legal tender, as provided in section 5103 of title 31, United States Code.

(c) NUMISMATIC ITEMS.—For purposes of section 5136 of title 31, United States Code, all coins minted under this Act shall be considered to be numismatic items.

(d) USE OF THE UNITED STATES MINT AT PHILADELPHIA, PENNSYLVANIA.—It is the sense of the Congress that the coins minted under this Act should be struck at the United States Mint at Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, to the greatest extent possible.

SEC. 4. DESIGN OF COINS.

(a) DESIGN REQUIREMENTS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The design of the coins minted under this Act shall be emblematic of the life and legacy of Benjamin Franklin.

(2) \$1 COINS WITH YOUNGER FRANKLIN IMAGE.—

(A) OBVERSE.—The obverse of the coins minted under section 3(a)(1) shall bear the image of Benjamin Franklin as a young man.

(B) REVERSE.—The reverse of the coins minted under section 3(a)(1) shall bear an image related to Benjamin Franklin's role as a patriot and a statesman.

(3) \$1 COINS WITH OLDER FRANKLIN IMAGE.—

(A) OBVERSE.—The obverse of the coins minted under section 3(a)(2) shall bear the image of Benjamin Franklin as an older man.

(B) REVERSE.—The reverse of the coins minted under section 3(a)(2) shall bear an image related to Benjamin Franklin's role in developing the early coins and currency of the new country.

(4) DESIGNATION AND INSCRIPTIONS.—On each coin minted under this Act there shall be—

- (A) a designation of the value of the coin;
- (B) an inscription of the year “2006”; and
- (C) inscriptions of the words “Liberty”, “In God We Trust”, “United States of America”, and “E Pluribus Unum”.

(b) **SELECTION.**—The design for the coins minted under this Act shall be—

- (1) selected by the Secretary after consultation with the Commission of Fine Arts; and
- (2) reviewed by the Citizens Coinage Advisory Committee established under section 5135 of title 31, United States Code.

SEC. 5. ISSUANCE OF COINS.

(a) **QUALITY OF COINS.**—Coins minted under this Act shall be issued in uncirculated and proof qualities.

(b) **COMMENCEMENT OF ISSUANCE.**—The Secretary may issue coins minted under this Act beginning January 1, 2006, except that the Secretary may initiate sales of such coins, without issuance, before such date.

(c) **TERMINATION OF MINTING AUTHORITY.**—No coins shall be minted under this Act after December 31, 2006.

SEC. 6. SALE OF COINS.

(a) **SALE PRICE.**—Notwithstanding any other provision of law, the coins issued under this Act shall be sold by the Secretary at a price equal to the face value, plus the cost of designing and issuing such coins (including labor, materials, dies, use of machinery, overhead expenses, and marketing).

(b) **BULK SALES.**—The Secretary shall make bulk sales of the coins issued under this Act at a reasonable discount.

(c) **PREPAID ORDERS AT A DISCOUNT.**—

(1) **IN GENERAL.**—The Secretary shall accept prepaid orders for the coins minted under this Act before the issuance of such coins.

(2) **DISCOUNT.**—Sale prices with respect to prepaid orders under paragraph (1) shall be at a reasonable discount.

(d) **SALES OF SINGLE COINS AND SETS OF COINS.**—Coins of each design specified under section 4 may be sold separately or as a set containing a coin of each such design.

SEC. 7. SURCHARGES.

(a) **SURCHARGE REQUIRED.**—All sales shall include a surcharge of \$10 per coin.

(b) **DISTRIBUTION.**—Subject to section 5134(f) of title 31, United States Code, all surcharges which are received by the Secretary from the sale of coins issued under this Act shall be promptly paid by the Secretary to the Franklin Institute for purposes of the Benjamin Franklin Tercentenary Commission.

(c) **AUDITS.**—The Franklin Institute shall be subject to the audit requirements of section 5134(f)(2) of title 31, United States Code, with regard to the amounts received by the Institute pursuant to subsection (b).

(d) **LIMITATION.**—Notwithstanding subsection (a), no surcharge may be included with respect to the issuance under this Act of any coin during a calendar year if, as of the time of such issuance, the issuance of such coin would result in the number of commemorative coin programs issued during such year to exceed the annual 2 commemorative coin program issuance limitation under section

5112(m)(1) of title 31, United States Code (as in effect on the date of the enactment of this Act). The Secretary of the Treasury may issue guidance to carry out this subsection.

Approved December 21, 2004.

LEGISLATIVE HISTORY—H.R. 3204:

CONGRESSIONAL RECORD, Vol. 150 (2004):

Nov. 17, considered and passed House.

Dec. 7, considered and passed Senate.